United Nations A/ES-10/563–S/2012/747

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
9 October 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 8 October 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you that Israel, the occupying Power, is continuing its military campaign against the Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza Strip, in grave breach of international law, including international humanitarian law and the relevant provisions regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the prohibition of reprisals and collective punishment against the civilian population under occupation. The intensification of Israel's aggression against the Gaza Strip threatens to further destabilize the situation on the ground and to fully ignite yet another round of deadly violence. This demands the attention of the international community, particularly of the Security Council, which is duty-bound to act to maintain international peace and security.

On Sunday, 7 October 2012, Israel, the occupying Power, unleashed a new round of deadly violence and terror against the Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza Strip. In this regard, the occupying Power launched a series of military strikes, including extrajudicial killings, i.e., targeted assassination, and military assaults against civilians and civilian areas, causing death and widespread destruction. These barbaric attacks by the occupying Power resulted in the death of Abdallah Hassan Makkawi, 24 years of age, who was deliberately targeted as he rode on his motorcycle in Rafah, as well as caused injury to more than 15 civilians, including 5 children, many of whom remain in serious condition. Today, Israel fired several artillery shells at the Qarara and Khuazaa areas east of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, injuring five Palestinian civilians.

Moreover, since our last letter, dated 6 September 2012, Israeli settlers have further escalated their campaign of terror against Palestinian civilians and their towns and villages across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. While the occupying Power employs its military might to sow death and destruction among Palestinians, its support for and incitement of the escalating terrorist attacks and intimidation by armed Israeli settler militias against Palestinian civilians also continue. In this regard, acts of violence, provocation and terror continue to be

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perpetrated by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and properties throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, on a near daily basis, including the destruction of 100 newly planted olive saplings and at least 60 vine trees on private Palestinian land in Al-Khader village near Bethlehem and the burning of tens of olive trees in the village of Beitillu near Ramallah. In addition to the above, on 2 October 2012, Israeli settlers attacked and spray-painted anti-Christian graffiti over the Convent of St. Francis in Jerusalem.

On Friday, 5 October 2012, Israeli occupying forces stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, firing stun grenades at Palestinian worshipers, after a group of settlers tried to enter the compound, causing injuries to several Palestinians. It should be recalled that during this year alone, more than 60 attacks were perpetrated by Israeli settlers and occupying forces against the sanctity of Christian and Muslim holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

The impunity of these extremist settlers is no doubt bolstered by the Israeli Government's failure and clear unwillingness to hold them accountable for the constant terror they are wreaking upon innocent Palestinian civilians. We reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, is responsible for all of the crimes committed by the settlers it has transferred to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in grave breach of international humanitarian law. The international community must also act to uphold its legal responsibilities in this regard and take measures to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable, and compel it to stop such criminal and racist attacks on the Palestinian civilian population.

Furthermore, we reiterate our call to the international community, in particular to the Security Council, to uphold its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and bring an immediate end to the occupying Power's latest round of Israeli military bombardment against the besieged Gaza Strip and to its illegal and immoral blockade there, as well as to reaffirm its rejection of all of Israel's criminal acts and illegal, violent and provocative actions taken against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 434 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 6 September 2012 (A/ES-10/562-S/2012/689), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations